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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 09/04/09

Index:

- 1) Top headlines
- 2) Editorials

Prime Minister's daily schedule (will be in today's Daily Summary)

Defense & Security

- 3) Senior U.S. official no to review of Futenma agreement (Asahi)
- 4) Coalition to continue MSDF refueling mission in Indian Ocean for the time being; SDP takes softer line (Yomiuri)

Foreign Relations

- 5) Special Representative for North Korea Policy Bosworth seeks to realize denuclearization of Korean Peninsula through talks; begins round of visits to Japan, China, and Korea (Yomiuri)
- 6) Obama to Hatoyama: prepared to consult with Japan for several months in order to further bilateral relationship (Yomiuri)
- 7) DPJ Vice President of Seiji Maehara: discontinuation of MSDF refueling mission would have little impact (Nikkei)
- 8) Hatoyama to meet individually with U.S., Chinese, Korean, and Russian leaders in late Sept. (Nikkei)
- 9) Hatoyama meets with U.S. and Russian ambassadors; diplomatic activity well underway; diplomacy gradually assuming "Hatoyama style" (Nikkei)
- 10) SDP makes additional foreign and labor policy proposals to DJP; three parties to resume consultations on the 8th (Tokyo Shimbun)
- 11) Gist of teleconference between Obama and Hatoyama (Sankei)
- 12) Hatoyama begins diplomatic activity; "victory thanks to President Obama" (Asahi)
- 13) U.S. Ambassador pays courtesy call on Hatoyama (Yomiuri)

Economics

14) Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry asks DJP "to clarify stance on global economy" (Nikkei)

Politics

15) Natsuo Yamaguchi tapped next New Komeito Party chief (Mainichi)

16) Ozawa picked as next DPJ secretary general; Kan and Okada to fill cabinet posts (Asahi)

Articles:

1) TOP HEADLINES

Asahi:

Ozawa to become DPJ secretary general; Kan, Okada certain to join cabinet

Mainichi, Sankei, and Tokyo Shimbun:

Ozawa to become DPJ secretary general; Okada tapped for key ministerial post

Yomiuri:

Ozawa to be named DPJ secretary general; Okada, Kan to take up key ministerial posts

Nikkei:

Mitsui-Sumitomo, Daiwa dissolve merger; Corporate securities firm Daiwa SMBC to become 100 PERCENT -owned Daiwa subsidiary

Akahata:

TOKYO 00002044 002 OF 010

116 civilians sent to battlefield; Forced to provide technical cooperation to SDF supporting U.S. forces

2) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

(1) To the new Hatoyama administration: Adopt responsible fiscal policy for future generations

Mainichi:

(1) Expectations on the new administration: Basic principle is to implement manifesto; Pledge to the people important

Yomiuri:

(1) Hatoyama's diplomacy with U.S.: Words and actions toward building trust put to test

(2) WTO talks: Start anew to aim for agreement

Nikkei:

(1) Mistake in airport, aviation policy as shown by Kansai Airport's struggle

(2) What is asked of the Consumer Affairs Agency

Sankei:

(1) Japan-U.S. phone conversation: Prove through actions that "alliance is cornerstone"

(2) Tokyo's bid to host the Olympics: Prime minister's turn to work for revival of dream

Tokyo Shimbun:

(1) Japan-U.S. relations: Take this as golden opportunity to build trust

(2) Nuclear reactor troubles: Too many "unexpected accidents"

Akahata:

(1) New influenza: Prepare for the peak of the epidemic

3) Senior U.S. officials say that U.S. will not review Futenma agreement in connection with DPJ public pledge

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)

Evening, September 3, 2009

Yusuke Murayama in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Hiroshi Ito in Washington

U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs Wallace Gregson gave on Sept. 2 an interview to the Asahi Shimbun in Hawaii, where he was visiting. Touching on the fact that the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) pledged in the recent general election a review of the Futenma Air Station relocation plan, Gregson made it clear that the United States has no intention of reviewing it. He said, "We are extremely satisfied with the current agreement on the airfield relocation plan."

Gregson has become the first senior U.S. Defense Department official to clarify the U.S. government's stance regarding a review of the relocation plan since the DPJ achieved a landslide victory in the general election. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell and Office of Japanese Affairs Director Kevin Maher, too, gave speeches in Washington, D.C., on the same day in which they also expressed the view that the United States will advance the present relocation plan. The announcements

TOKYO 00002044 003 OF 010

not to review the relocation plan by both State and Defense department officials playing central roles in the U.S.'s Japan policy have now made it difficult for the DPJ to deliver on its campaign pledge.

Gregson announced a plan to look for ways to work closely with the soon-to-be-launched DPJ administration, saying, "We are looking forward to working with the (new) Japanese government." He also clearly indicated that the agreements reached in the past between the Japanese and U.S. governments, including one on the (Futenma) relocation plan, will not be affected by the shift of power (in Japan), saying, "We think the agreements have been reached with the Japanese government."

Meanwhile, Campbell said in his speech, "The Okinawa issue is a long-standing issue. We have pressed forward, and we want to continue to do so." Also, touching on the fact that State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly said to the press on Aug. 31 that the U.S. government will not renegotiate with the Japanese government, Campbell said, "I, too, support his statement."

Maher, too, emphasized in his speech that the United States has no intention of altering the current plan, saying, "We have agreed on the present plan with the Japanese government, not with the LDP administration. This is an agreement between the two states. We will continue discussions with the DPJ administration as well--that is, we will discuss how to implement the current plan. This plan will help dramatically reduce the burden on Okinawa and maintain the U.S. military's capabilities."

Referring to the DPJ's Asia-oriented foreign policy, Campbell said, "We hope Japan will display stronger leadership among Asian countries, and we will support that. We believe that such a process will lead the DPJ to become fully aware of the importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance."

4) SDP softens on MSDF refueling mission

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Abridged)
September 4, 2009

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) consulted yesterday evening with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP) to form a tripartite coalition government. In the consultative meeting, the three parties agreed to incorporate a package of job security measures in their written agreement as urgent tasks. The SDP has altered its stance of seeking the immediate withdrawal of the Maritime Self-Defense Force from its refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. During the talks, the SDP indicated that it would consider the DPJ's stance of allowing the MSDF refueling mission to continue through January next year. This SDP concession is a step forward for an agreement on a coalition. However, the three parties have yet to finalize their coordination and are expected to reach a full-fledged agreement on Sept. 8 or later.

The talks were attended by DPJ Policy Research Committee Chairman

Masayuki Naoshima, SDP policy chief Tomoko Abe, and PNP policy chief Shozaburo Jimi. Prior to the talks, the DPJ worked out a second draft agreement. In the preceding day's talks, the SDP insisted that a policy consensus agreement for forming a coalition should incorporate the settlement of issues relating to U.S. military bases in Japan. The draft agreement therefore added a statement saying

TOKYO 00002044 004 OF 010

their coalition government will seek to build a "future-oriented relationship" by promoting cooperation between Japan and the United States, and will try to settle issues between the two countries.

5) U.S. Special Representative Bosworth starts tour of Japan, China, ROK for consultations on denuclearization of Korean Peninsula

YOMIURI (Page 7) (Excerpts)
September 4, 2009

Keiichi Honma, Washington

Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. government special representative (for policy on North Korea) arrived in Beijing yesterday. He has begun his three-nation trip to China, the Republic of Korea, and Japan. The major purpose of his East Asian tour, his first trip to the region in about three months, is to uphold the stance of placing importance on the framework of the Six-Party Talks and continuing the sanctions against North Korea despite Pyongyang's recent conciliatory moves. Meanwhile, the U.S. envoy will likely discuss behind closed doors with the three countries' officials concrete measures "for a comprehensive solution" in expectation of the North's return to the multinational talks. He will make clear the determination to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula by using a dialogue and pressure approach.

Bosworth will be in Beijing on Sept. 3-4, Seoul on Sept. 4-6, and Tokyo on Sept. 6-8. He will hold talks with the three countries' officials in charge of policy on North Korea. U.S. Special Envoy Sung Kim, who is accompanying Bosworth, will hold talks in Seoul with a high-level Russian government official.

6) Obama: "Several months" to stabilize ties with Japan

YOMIURI (Top play) (Abridged)
Eve., September 3, 2009

Satoshi Ogawa, Washington

In a telephone conversation between Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Hatoyama and U.S. President Obama early on Sept. 3 (Japan time), Obama called on the DPJ to take action after coming into office so Japan and the United States can continue stable relations, sources on Japan-U.S. relations revealed. Obama was quoted as telling Hatoyama: "The United States is ready to hold talks with Japan over the next several weeks to several months in order to move bilateral relations forward."

In its campaign for the recent House of Representatives election, the DPJ advocated building a "close, equal relationship" between Japan and the United States. In addition, the DPJ proposed policy revisions that could affect the bilateral alliance through such steps as reexamining the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan as well as the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement.

Obama is scheduled to visit Japan in mid-November for the first time. The U.S. government positions Obama's first visit to Japan as "an event that must not fail." By indicating a timeframe to the DPJ, the Obama administration seemed to be implying that it would ask to the DPJ to respond in a pragmatic manner.

7) DPJ's Maehara: Withdrawal of refueling mission unlikely to have

TOKYO 00002044 005.2 OF 010

significant impact (on Japan-U.S. relations)

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
September 4, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Vice President Seiji Maehara, on an NHK program yesterday, took the view that a withdrawal of the Maritime Self-Defense Force's mission in the Indian Ocean, the term of which will expire next January, will unlikely have a significant impact on the Japan-U.S. relationship. He categorically said: "Since we have talked about the issue with the United States, I think they understand that the refueling operations will be discontinued if a DPJ administration is launched." However, he added: "We will not simply end it," suggesting that the DPJ will consider measures to support Afghanistan to replace the refueling mission.

8) DPJ President Hatoyama to meet separately with U.S., Chinese, South Korean and Russian leaders during his late-September U.S. visit

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
September 4, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama on September 3 started making adjustments toward holding separate talks with U.S. President Barack Obama, Chinese President Hu Jintao, South Korean President Lee Myung Bak and Russian President Dmitriy Medvedev, when he visits the U.S. in late September to deliver a speech at the UN General Assembly. These will be his first meetings with the leaders of those countries after his nomination for prime minister in the special Diet session to be convened on the 16th.

Hatoyama will likely launch his cabinet after the nomination for prime minister on the 16th and leave for the U.S. possibly on the 21st. He is expected to attend a series of meetings, including the UN climate change summit, the UN General Assembly, where he will deliver a speech, and the UN Security Council (UNSC) summit on nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament. He will also participate in the G-20 in Pittsburgh, starting on the evening of the 24th.

These meetings will be attended by the leaders of various countries, including President Obama. Hatoyama has decided that it will be necessary to meet with leaders of various countries at an early date, taking advantage of various international meetings to be held right after he assumes the post of prime minister. Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka explained on the 3rd the diplomatic schedules for September and beyond at a meeting with DPJ Secretary General Katsuya Okada held at the party headquarters. Hatoyama intends to seek understanding from leaders of various countries regarding the DPJ's foreign affairs policy at his meetings with them. However, chances are that since these meetings will be his first meetings with the leaders, all the meetings will be brief. It is unlikely that there will be any in-depth discussions on such pending issues as the US Forces Japan realignment, involving the U.S. and the Northern Territories issue, involving Russia.

9) Hatoyama-style diplomatic activities gradually getting into full swing

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Almost full)
September 4, 2009

TOKYO 00002044 006.2 OF 010

On September 3 Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Hatoyama pursued full-scale diplomatic activities with an eye on the inauguration of his administration. He met with U.S. Ambassador to Japan Roos and Russian Ambassador to Japan Bely at the party headquarters. He also held telephone conversations with British Prime Minister Brown, Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. He employed his own diplomatic style in those talks, as can be seen by the fact that no Foreign Ministry official was in attendance.

Hatoyama stressed his stance of attaching importance to the U.S. during his meeting with Roos, as he did during the telephone conversation with Obama. He said, "The Japan-U.S. alliance is the cornerstone of world peace. I learned how to love my own country

when I was studying in the U.S., which made me decide to aim to become a politician." Roos responded, "The U.S. President is looking forward to working with the new prime minister."

About an hour after meeting with Roos, Hatoyama met with Bely. A person related to the government questioned his meeting the ambassadors of two major countries in the space of less than an hour. "That is not normally done," he commented. An aide to Hatoyama explained, "We have arranged the schedule in a natural way. It turns out that this schedule happened to show the importance Mr. Hatoyama attaches to improving Japan-Russian relations."

An interpreter prepared by the DPJ was present at the telephone conversation with Obama and during other meetings. There have been few occasions in which Foreign Ministry officials were present at diplomatic activities by opposition party leaders. With the transfer of administration close at hand, a senior Foreign Ministry official said, "We wanted to have an official present at those meetings, if possible." However, a source connected with the DPJ revealed that the party had determined that if right after its victory in the Lower House election a government official attends Hatoyama's talks with foreign leaders the party's policy of realizing politician-led government would be brought into question.

10) SDP presents additional proposals regarding foreign policy and employment

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Excerpts)
September 4, 2009

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), Social Democratic Party (SDP), and People's New Party (PNP) held their second round of talks last night for launching a coalition government. The day before, on Sept. 2, the three parties reached an agreement on policies in outline. In yesterday's session, the SDP presented a set of additional proposals regarding foreign and security policies. The DPJ representative said that he will inform his party of the proposals. The three parties will meet again on Sept. 8.

The SDP is calling for establishment of a tripartite policy coordination body and freezing a plan to reduce the number of Lower House proportional representation seats. The three parties confirmed yesterday that they will discuss these issues at the secretary general level. They also agreed to implement emergency employment measures.

In reaction to the foreign and security policies presented by the DPJ on Sept. 2, the SDP proposed the following: (1) adding the

TOKYO 00002044 007 OF 010

phrase that Japan will "quickly withdraw" the Maritime Self-Defense Force from the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, and specifying additional support measures for Afghanistan; (2) specifying that the Japan Coast Guard will be the main force in combating piracy off Somalia; and (3) inclusion of a revision of the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement.

11) Gist of the telephone conversation between Hatoyama and Obama

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)
September 4, 2009

The following is the gist of remarks made by Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama to the press corps about his telephone conversation with U.S. President Barack Obama before dawn on Sept. 3:

-- What did you discuss with the President?

Hatoyama: The two democratic parties won on both sides of the ocean, and he congratulated me. I told him that the DPJ was able to achieve victory thanks to President Obama. Japan has seen its first major change of political party in power through the democratic process. Making changes requires courage, and it is the American people and President Obama who gave that courage to the Japanese people. That's what I told him.

(I told him) that we, too, think the Japan-U.S. alliance is the cornerstone (of Japanese security) and that we want to build constructive, future-oriented Japan-U.S. relations.

-- There was a critical reaction to your op-ed that appeared in a U.S. newspaper. Did you explain your view of that reaction?

Hatoyama: The other side (Obama) did not bring up the subject.

-- Did you talk about the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean?

Hatoyama: I want to discuss that thoroughly when the two of us meet. Of course, we have our own basic stance, but there are some parts (of the mission) that should be comprehensively reviewed.

-- Did you discuss a Japan-U.S. summit?

Hatoyama: I sensed he desires to meet me as early as possible. I told him that I would like to attend the UN (General Assembly) and to see him then.

-- Did you agree on the maintenance of the Japan-U.S. alliance?

Hatoyama: Of course.

-- Did you talk about the realignment of U.S. forces (in Japan)?

Hatoyama: We didn't.

12) Hatoyama diplomacy set in motion, starts safely; Hatoyama says "DPJ won thanks to President Obama"

ASAHI (Page 4) (Slightly abridged)
September 4, 2009

TOKYO 00002044 008 OF 010

Nao Fujita, Kei Ukai

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama met U.S. Ambassador John Roos and Russian Ambassador Mikhail Bely at the party headquarters on September 3, one day after his teleconference with U.S. President Barack Obama. He also received phone calls from British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, and Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Zapatero to extend their congratulations. However, the direction of Hatoyama's "yuai (fraternal)" diplomacy remains vague.

Hatoyama got off to a safe start in his diplomacy with the U.S.

When Obama noted that "the Democratic Party won on both sides of the ocean," Hatoyama told him, "The DPJ won thanks to President Obama."

The DPJ's manifesto pledges an "equal Japan-U.S. alliance." However, Hatoyama did not mention this in his telephone conversation with Obama. The government's official position that "the Japan-U.S. alliance is the cornerstone" came up instead.

This safe start strongly reflects Hatoyama's desire to "build a relationship of trust with President Obama first."

However, there is no indication of Hatoyama's determination to take up pending issues with the U.S., including the U.S. Forces Japan realignment plans, sooner or later.

In the first place, the concept of "equal Japan-U.S. alliance" and the policies deriving from this concept were decided under the leadership of former President Ichiro Ozawa.

It appears that Hatoyama has not sorted out which of the Ozawa policies he will carry over and which policies he will change.

In an article contributed to a monthly magazine, Hatoyama discussed "yuai diplomacy" and pointed to a path toward an "East Asian community." However, the sections criticizing the U.S. were

highlighted by the U.S. media, and he is now scrambling to explain that he had no intention to set forth anti-U.S. thinking. There is no denying that he gives the impression of being undecided.

Major items on the diplomatic schedule for 2009 (including those still being coordinated)

September 6-8 U.S. special envoy for North Korean policy Stephen Bosworth visits Japan

16 Hatoyama to be elected prime minister
Mid-September? U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell visits Japan

22 UN high-level event on climate change (New York)

23 UNSC summit on nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament (New York)

24 Prime Minister Hatoyama's speech to UN General Assembly (New York)

24-25 G-20 financial summit (Pittsburgh)
Summit meetings with U.S., China, Russia, etc.

TOKYO 00002044 009 OF 010

Mid-October U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates visits Japan

17-20 International committee on nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament meeting (Hiroshima)

23-25 ASEAN-related summit meetings (Thailand)
November 6-7 Japan-Mekong summit (Tokyo)

14-15 APEC summit (Singapore)
Mid-November U.S. President Obama visits Japan
Late November Afghan peace conference sponsored by supra-partisan Diet members' group (Tokyo)
December 7-18 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15; Copenhagen)

13) U.S., Russian Ambassadors make courtesy call on Hatoyama

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
September 4, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama received courtesy calls from U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos and Russian Ambassador Mikhail Bely at the party headquarters on September 3.

His meeting with Roos, a fellow alumnus of Stanford University, took place in an amicable atmosphere. Hatoyama talked about the importance of the Japan-U.S. relationship, saying, "The Japan-U.S. relationship is the cornerstone of Japanese diplomacy. We should promote constructive future-oriented relations." Ambassador Roos remarked that "the Japan-U.S. relationship is a special relationship." He called for cooperation on such issues as climate change.

Meanwhile, Hatoyama emphasized at his meeting with Bely that "building a relationship of trust between leaders is important for finding a solution to the territorial issue."

Hatoyama also talked on the phone with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

After this series of meetings, Hatoyama told reporters at the DPJ headquarters: "(The issue of relocating U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa) will only go well if the Japanese and U.S. governments and the people of Okinawa come to an agreement. It will be difficult to find a solution in haste. It is necessary to conduct a comprehensive review of issues including the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and the sympathy budget (omoiyari yosan; host nation support) while building a relationship of trust with President Obama," stressing his stance of conducting pragmatic diplomacy.

14) JCCI asked DPJ to clarify its stance on international economy

NIKKEI (Page 5) (Full)
September 4, 2009

Referring to the soon-to-be-launched DPJ-led administration, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Tadashi Okamura during a press conference on September 3 said, "The DPJ's policy manifesto does not include much on how Japan should acquire economic competitiveness." He then asked the DPJ to envisage a growth strategy for not only expanding domestic demand centered on

TOKYO 00002044 010 OF 010

assistance for household budgets but also creating foreign demand, noting, "I would like the DPJ to come up with a clear stance regarding what economic and diplomatic activities it will pursue with regard to the international economy."

15) Natsuo Yamaguchi to become New Komeito head

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Full)
September 4, 2009

The New Komeito yesterday entered final coordination to endorse its policy chief Natsuo Yamaguchi as its chief representative, replacing the incumbent leader, Akihiro Ota. The party will informally endorse him on Sept. 7 at a Central Secretary Committee meeting, and it will formally endorse him at a meeting on Sept. 8 of the national representatives.

The New Komeito aims to publicize "a generational change" with an eye toward the House of Councillors election next summer. Vice Representative Yoshihisa Inoue and Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Yoshio Urushibara are being floated as candidates to succeed Secretary General Kazuo Kitagawa.

Yamaguchi is a 57-year old lawyer-turned politician. He is now serving in his second term in the Upper House since 2001, after serving two terms in the House of Representatives.

Since the New Komeito's Lower House seats fell from 31 to 21 in Sunday's general election, it is now being forced to regain party strength.

16) Ozawa to become DPJ secretary general; Kan, Okada certain to join cabinet

ASAHI (Top play) (Abridged)
September 4, 2009

It was decided on September 3 that Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa will be appointed as the party's secretary general. President Yukio Hatoyama made the request to Ozawa at the party headquarters on the evening of September 3, and he accepted. While there are concerns in the party that Ozawa's appointment as secretary general may produce a "dual power structure" between the cabinet and the ruling parties, it was decided that Ozawa's leadership is indispensable for uniting the party, which has expanded tremendously after the landslide victory in the recent general election, in order to win in the House of Councillors election in summer 2010.

While the basic rule in the DPJ is that senior party officials will serve concurrently as cabinet ministers, the secretary general will not join the cabinet. Since Hatoyama is thinking of appointing Ozawa, Deputy President Naoto Kan, and Secretary General Katsuya Okada to key positions, it is now certain that Kan and Okada will join the cabinet. Hatoyama told reporters on the evening of September 3 that, "I would like (Okada) to take up a key cabinet post."

ROOS